

# Roving dentist leaves smiles in wake as clinic sets out for Philippines

By JoAnn Jacobsen-Wells  
Deseret News medical writer

Many of Salt Lake's homeless are now all smiles after meeting "Dr. Ralph."

Ralph Montgomery, a Murray dentist on his way to the remote Philippine island of Palawan, stopped off at the St. Vincent De Paul Center for what he termed a "trial run."

Montgomery and his colleagues are at the center through Friday working out the bugs of a new custom-built, 30-foot mobile dental clinic that will be presented to the Palawan Dental Society Jan. 16.

The \$500,000 educational vehicle is a gift from Rotary International. It is equipped with two built-in dental chairs and support units, X-ray, refrigerators and medical examination table.

Once the self-contained vehicle arrives in the Philippines, the comprehensive project will work like this: American dentists will contribute 30 days every other month on Palawan, working side-by-side with native dentists who will be trained in modern techniques and the use of X-ray equipment. The local dentists will receive additional instruction from a video dental correspondence-type program developed by Loma Linda School of Dental Medicine under Montgomery's direction.

During the Americans' off-months, the participating Palawan dentists can use the clinic to treat their own patients — as long as 50 percent of their time is spent serving the poor.

The idea for the model clinic was conceived by Montgomery after he had practiced on Palawan as a Rotary Club volunteer for two 30-day time periods in 1985 and 1987. The island is one of the least-

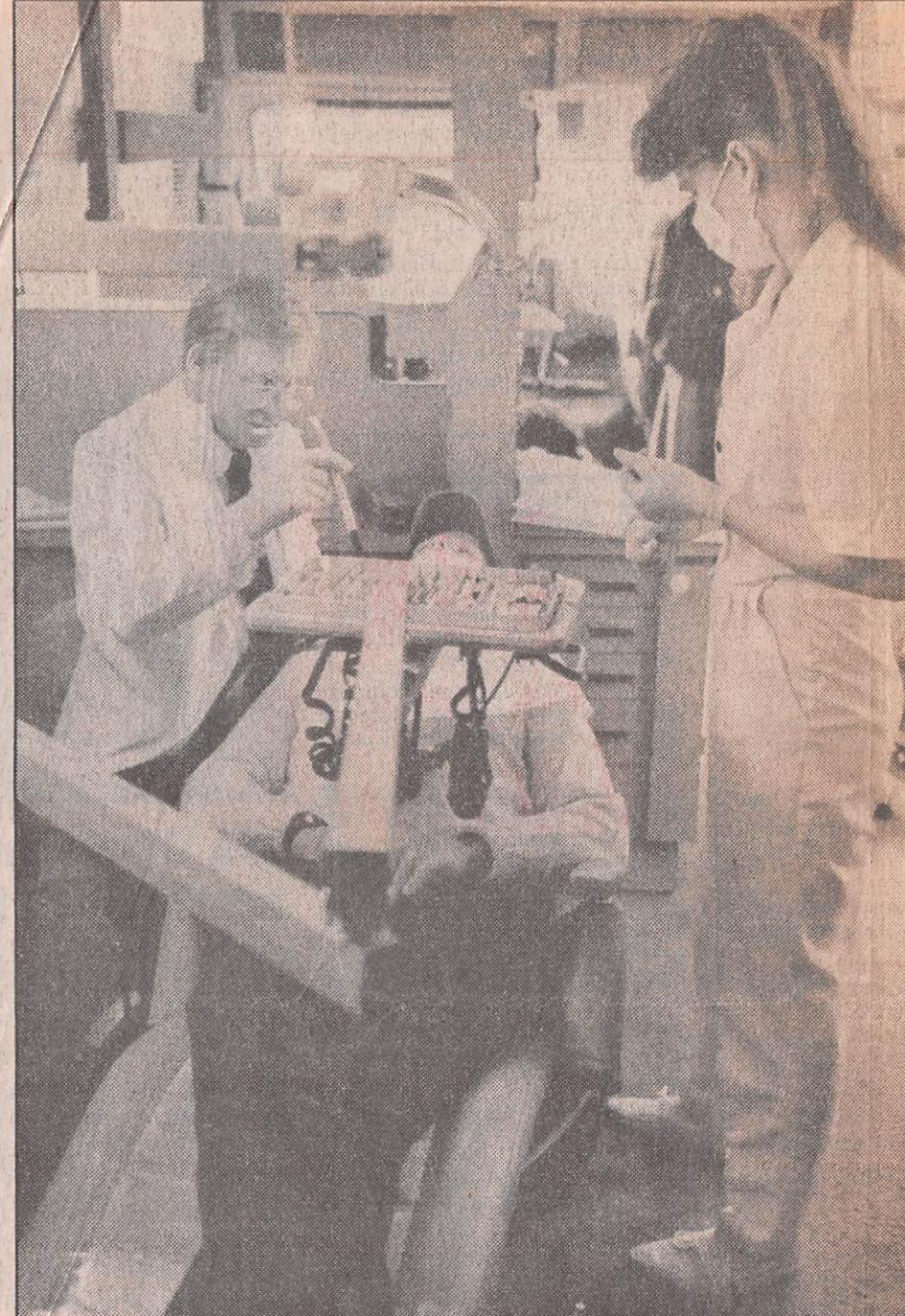


**Dr. Ralph Montgomery and assistant Laura Etroni put mobile dental clinic to the test at St. Vincent De Paul Center before its sent to the Philippines to help in training dentists and aiding the homeless.**

PHOTOGRAPHY/ DON GRAYSTON

But he couldn't solve the island's dental problems alone.

Thus, the idea of the mobile van emerged — an idea that gained immediate financial support from Rotary International.



tioning the way it should," Montgomery said. "It's a good thing we found these little things here instead of in Palawan. We couldn't go downtown there and find what we need."

The homeless, like the Filipinos, have reduced self-esteem when their teeth are deteriorating.

To provide continual help to the homeless, Montgomery donated equipment, in-

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unit.

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wrote for the proposed BL4 facility  
could merely be updated and re-  
leased in final form with more information  
about BL3 options, or whether  
the EIS process needs to begin  
again.

"We don't have a firm legal decision  
yet," Whitaker said.

Erickson said Downwinders feel  
that because the Army is significantly  
changing the scope of the project  
it once proposed, a new EIS is needed.  
"We think it should be fully re-  
written and that public hearings are  
essential."

## CLOSURE

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Payson, Charter Canyon Hospital in  
Orem and Utah Valley Regional  
Medical Center in Provo.

Nine patients — three adults and  
six adolescents — being treated at  
Riverwood were relocated Tuesday  
to Mountain View.

Michael Graham, administrator at  
Mountain View, said the hospital was  
asked to accommodate the patients  
because the physicians who admitted  
them to Riverwood also have practice  
privileges at Mountain View, and the  
hospital's psychiatric unit can  
provide the same treatment the patients  
had been receiving at Riverwood.

Two additional employees have  
been added to the psychiatric unit at  
Mountain View.

Riverwood Hospital was opened  
three years ago by Healthcare Services  
of America. A majority interest in  
HSA was bought by Ramsey one  
year ago. In the past year Ramsey  
has sold three free-standing chemical-  
dependency centers and a 50-bed  
psychiatric hospital, in Idaho Falls,  
as part of its consolidation efforts.



PHOTOGRAPHY/ GERALD SILVER

## It's Christmas on Capitol Hill

With a flick of a switch, Gov. Norm Bangerter lit more than 4,000 white lights adorning a 32-foot blue spruce Christmas tree this week, signaling the start of the holiday season on Capitol Hill. Enhancing the traditional lighting celebration were the Sunshine Generation, right, a singing group of orange-and-yellow-clad children. Several school

homelies who received free and essential dental care, including new silver fillings that are too heavy and large for the mobile unit.

The trial run also benefited dozens of



be able to smile again," Montgomery said. "We found out there are things we didn't have, and that certain equipment isn't func-

"I pulled more teeth in a month in Palau than I'd extracted in some 32 years in the Air Force and in private practice," he said.

Philipines.

developed and poorest provinces in the